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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1-13 (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) A gateway appliance for sending data to and receiving data from a remote data storage location accessible over a communications link, said gateway appliance comprising:

a data processor;

a first communications port for communicating with a plurality of computers in a computer network;

a second communications port for communicating with a remote data storage facility; and

a non-volatile data storage device for storing locally, data to be communicated via said second communications port;

wherein said gateway appliance means for emulating a file system corresponding to a file system of a network of computer entities[[:]]; and

means for converting data between a file system dependent format and a file system independent format[[:]]; and

means for converting said data between a compressed format and an uncompressed format.

15. (Currently Amended) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 14,

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wherein said ~~means for~~ emulating a file system operates to create emulation data which emulates a file system type of a network of computer entities, in a format suitable for incorporating with a user data file for transmission to a remote data storage device.

16. (Original) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 14, configured to make a scheduled transmission burst of changes to files since a last transmission burst, wherein only blocks inside files which have changed since the last transmission are transmitted in said scheduled transmission.

Claims 17-23 (Cancelled)

24. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, wherein said emulation data comprises data describing security attributes of said user data.

25. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, wherein transmitting said transmission file comprises transmitting a plurality of modified portions of user files which have changed since a last transmission event.

26. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, wherein transmitting occurs at predetermined intervals, and writing said user data comprises caching said user data in said local data storage device between file transmission events.

27. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, wherein said user data is cached in a file at said local data storage area in a file system independent format; and

periodically, a portion of said file which is changed compared to a previously transmitted version of said file is transmitted over said communications link for remote data storage.

28. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, wherein said

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transmission file comprises a block of a user data file representing incremental changes of said user data file, and said changes of said user data file are received in compressed format by the following steps:

decompressing said changed block of user data;

decompressing a received full said transmission file;

combining said decompressed changed block of user data;

decompressing said full transmission file;

updating said full transmission file by incorporating said changed block of user data to obtain an updated data file; and

recompressing said updated data file.

29. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, further comprising prior to transmitting said transmission file over said communications link, compressing and encrypting said transmission file.

30. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, further comprises the steps of:

maintaining said data file for transmission in said computer entity in which said user data is written to a local data storage area;

receiving an incremental change to said user data file;

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modifying said user data file by incorporation of said incremental change prior to transmitting said transmission file over said communications link for remote data storage.

31. (New) The gateway appliance as claimed in claim 15, further comprises the steps of:

receiving from said remote data storage device:

a compressed encrypted package representing a user data file; and

one or more compressed encrypted packages representing updates to said user data file;

decompressing and decrypting said received package representing said user data file;

decompressing and decrypting each of said one or more packages representing updates of said user data file; and

combining said user data file with said updates of said user data file to obtain an updated user data file, reconstituted from said data packages received from said remote data storage device.